

VZCZCXRO6857
RR RUEHGR
DE RUEHBH #0316 1381211
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 181211Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6379
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS NASSAU 000316

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CAR AND EB
SANTO DOMINGO FOR USFCS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [BEXP](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [BF](#)

SUBJECT: FOUR SEASONS RESORT IN EXUMA CLOSING IN TWO WEEKS

[¶1.](#) (U) SUMMARY: The Four Seasons Resort in Exuma will close on May 26, leaving at least 500 workers unemployed. The Four Seasons is Exuma's largest employer and is a part of the Emerald Bay

development, a government dubbed anchor project for the island of Exuma. The resort went into foreclosure in June 2007; since then the receivers, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), have not been able to find a buyer and have announced the decision to close. The closure of Four Seasons will have a detrimental impact on the island's tourism-based economy. End Summary.

THE BOTTOM LINE

[¶2.](#) (U) The Four Seasons Emerald Bay has been the key driver of Exuma's economy since opening in 2003. In addition to creating direct jobs the resort was a catalyst for the opening of other businesses to service the needs of the hotel's growing emigrant workforce. The resort went into receivership in 2007 with the expectation that there would be a quick sale given the high level of interest in the property. However, PwC was unable to conclude a sale, despite signing a letter of intent with one party and entering into formal contract with two others, citing a weakened global economy and reduced investor confidence as the reason for lack of sale. Throughout 2008 Mitsui, the resort's main creditor, incurred \$5 million in losses from keeping the Four Seasons operational.

[¶3.](#) (U) The decision to discontinue operations was taken by Mitsui after the agreement to sell the Four Seasons Emerald Bay to a consortium, including developer Barry Silverton and accounting firm Cushman and Wakefield, fell through at the end of March. According to representatives at PwC it was a reluctant but necessary move to temper future losses from the property. PwC said they expect the closure to be temporary and hope to have the resort reopened under new management. They also noted that the potential buyers were informed of the decision and it has not affected interest.

THE UNCERTAIN WINTER

[¶4.](#) (U) Employees at Four Seasons Emerald Bay are upset at the news of the shut down. Many of them travelled from Nassau and other islands and were provided accommodations on the resort campus, leaving them one month to make alternative living arrangements. PwC has promised to pay full severance packages and to fund the repatriation of those who emigrated from other islands. Nevertheless, employees are unconvinced that these promises will be kept. They are also worried about future employment prospects in an economy already dealing with record high unemployment rates and a decrease in tourism rates.

UNCLASSIFIED
DEA 05/15/09
DEA: D. DOWNING
USCG: L. SERBER
NONE
OPBAT

AMEMBASSY NASSAU
COGARD SECTOR KEY WEST FL

INFO CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL
COGARD INTSUPRTCOM MIAMI FL

FOUO
DEPT. FOR INL/LP-BROWN

E.O. 12958:N/A
TAGS: [BEXP](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [BF](#)
SUBJECT: ENTRY APPROVAL FOR LTJG ELIEZER GONZALEZ, USCG

[¶](#)A. YOUR 151425Z MAY 09
[¶](#)B. USCG PERSONNEL MANUAL, COMDTINST M1000.6A, ART 4-H
[¶](#)1. ENTRY APPROVAL FOR MBR, DEPNS, HHG AND POV ARE GRANTED.
[¶](#)2. MBR CURRENTLY HOLDS SECRET CLEARANCE. NACLIC DATE: 20070821.
SF-312 SIGNED: 20080109.
[¶](#)3. POC: LT L. SERBER, OPBAT DEPUTY DIRECTOR, AT 301-985-9404 OR
LYLE.R.SERBER2(AT)USCG.MIL

ZUNIGA BROWN